

## Body & Mind And the Linguistic Ultimate

### 1

Is there not an illuminating analogy in a setting beside each other the development of 'computer intelligence' and the development, in this century's experiments in poetic stylistics, of a poetry of verbal automatism that issues into public life (or intended public life) as instant objectivism produced by a new subjectivism, made insensitive to itself by a process disconnecting poet-consciousness from the actualities of involvement in the use of words in a communication-bond? Both attitudes, that of postulation of a computer 'intelligence' and that of postulation of a poetry in which plotted word-configurations deliver themselves as achieved communication, have their base in a twentieth-century fanaticism with the idea of identifying the operations of the mind, especially in their linguistic realization as distinctly 'mental' operations, as physiological performances: as, that is, products of brain-activity, patterns of responsive behavior at the programme-center of the body's neural network of communication with itself.

The effect of scientific reduction of the form of being distinguished by the word 'mind' to the data-terms of the bodily form of being has not merely replaced 'mind' with 'brain' as identification of the organism of thinking consciousness; it has physicalized the idea of mind into a mechanics of identification-procedures that nullifies the rational bases, the coherency-principle, of linguistic identification. Thus, Descartes, resting the humanly crucial differentiation 'body', 'mind', on canons of linguistic reason, not on the canons of scientific reason, mechanistic, mathematically reductionist, identity-nullifying, becomes for twentieth-century science-affiliated philosophies the arch-proponent of a reactionary dualistic rationalism. Psychology has systematized scientific and philosophic rejection of the differentiation 'body', 'mind', into a concept that equates mind with a supposedly comprehensive brain, in which a supposed 'unconscious' is stored, from which a derivative miniature 'conscious' draws substance for vague, amorphous enactments of 'identity', meaningless in themselves. This comprehensive brain-concept is reproduced in the idea of 'computer intelligences': the brain

is conceived of as a compact reduction of human experience-content to a utility-basis for pragmatic response to all incidents of experience.

Mind, according to this scheme of identifications, is a trick of bodily ingenuity for applying what the brain compactly encompasses of the totality of experience to the requirements of immediate purpose. Mind is construed as a precipitation of brain-power of discontinuous but invokable presence in bodily space, existing there in a ghostly come-and-go arbitrary reality as 'personal' consciousness. This demystification of mind as the key to the miracle of determinate human being—the singular human possession of awareness of a scope of being beyond the rings of Nature's mutually exclusive involuntarily overlapping eccentricities of endlessly indeterminate physicality—reduces mind to an eccentric mystery of human bodiliness. Being human becomes merely the crowning eccentricity among Nature's infinite variations on the fortuitous. Appreciation of human identity as an absurdity is the new enlightenment darkening out the old enlightenment; human mentality is worn as a refinement of human physicality.

Mind, the free gift of free-extending awareness, immanent in the self-recognized actuality of being 'human', has been primitively and in later and late historic time understood as the body-transcending element of the person into which the substance of human identity forms itself. The contradictions between the exteriority of mind to body and its interiority in the person embraced in this sense of possession of mind were found both mentally and physically digestible until the present era of philosophic rebellion against the illuminations of philosophy—or religion—representing contradiction as necessarily self-cancelling in a universe infinitely self-complementary. Where human identity had entrusted itself to the mind as its authenticator and defender against the fortuities of bodily existence, the mystery-character of having a 'mind' realistically absorbed in the extra-bodily, supra-bodily experience of *being* a mind, this ages-old sensitivity was overthrown. The mind as the site of identity, the home-ground of the human person, began to be more and more abandoned, suspected as philosophic—or religious—myth, for the body, the body re-evaluated as the brain-monitored private universe of experience, and identity-home of the individual human being.

Self-determinating retreat from the General to the Particular, from the life of the self as mind inhabiting a universe animate with desire of mind-presence to, in, itself, obliterated sensitivity to the call that the General makes upon the human mind, with languages to bind the dispersed Particular of universal physicality into a universe spirited with an all-recon-



ciling identity of mind. The human difference from all the differences of Nature's loose patchwork universe of self-tolerant incoherence seized the human occasion as its private own, began so seizing it little by little at varying whiles ago, and is now enforcing an interruption of being's timeless insistence on an inevitable peace with itself. Choosing vagrancy, human-being imprisons the wandering physical universe in its wilful aimlessness: the universe imprisoned in it by human difference lost, squandered. This is not a world ended, but a world stopped, living a stopped life. Tyrannic isolation of the human in itself stops the course of mind-reality in the comprehensive universe, that travel through the slow, slow, minutiae of verification of the possibility of particular mind-effort concentrated in the human to make the General manifest without physicality's chaotic display of reality-abbreviating eccentricities.

These times are not as other times of human experiment in human difference, venture in learning its reaches, what it is, where it takes. They are times of human experiment in disclaiming the difference, in assuming an absolute identity of *no* identity, of self-immured idiosyncrasy. There has come to predominate in the human a propensity to separation of the human from its peculiarity, as a figure of the physical history of nature, of reproducing in itself the attributes of mind that belong to the comprehensive nature of the universe of complete being. In terms of human consciousness of the nature of the human as mind-nature, this abstraction of the human from presence in the all-responsible reality of indivisible being means rejection by the human of responsibility for everything outside the physical circumferences of human identity. Minds reject mind. Human meaning rejects meaning. Knowledge, the travel-genius of the human mind, is replaced by faculties that localize intelligence within separate little worlds of 'cognition'—the replacement term for 'knowledge', in the language of this new bodified mentalism. Because the poetic area of word-use has been the established practical trying-out ground for the mind's exercise of its function of identity-center of the human, in the body-mind relations in the human constitution, the effects of the inversion I have been describing of the instinctively respected priority of mind in these relations are more distinguishable as such, in this area, than in other areas of human manifestation of special identity-consciousness.

In the poetic form of human manifestation of identity-consciousness, the bodily element has been treated—in theory and in practice, and in conviction—as the companionable assistant to mind, responsive, in its 'best' aspects, to the mind's prompting call. But in the now-world of altered

human interpretation of the human, poetry has acquired a new image of religious value. The poetically spiritualized bodily element of consciousness has been transmuted, in a politics of pretension to concern with freedom of verbal behavior, into a physically energized language-seat, from which 'the mind' is managed as a de-mythologized entity, given a secularized part in a new human charge-taking of the human. Poetry was shifted from guardianship of a principle of body-mind unity to the policing of a security of new body-centered consciousness against the intrusion of old poetic faith in a ruling reality of mind as the governing fact of human nature. Under the protection of the name 'Poetry', the revolution in human consciousness disconnecting the human possession of mind from the evident permeative factor of mind-presence in the universal substance of being has cloaked itself under a sanctity of love-of-words allowing of a linguistic ritualism equating the physicalities of utterance with a truth of pragmatically human reference. That is 'true' which is containable in a human context, all contexts being validably 'human' that define themselves as such. No other area of revolutionarily expressive consciousness, besides poetry, offers the alternative to barren 'cognitive' pluralism of the humanistic relativism of a sentimental truth, its human spuriousness exorcised in preoccupation with sincerities of identification with words as features of bodily performance and experience. Poetry, that is, has been converted into a truth-loyal refuge from truth.

Except in the poetic area of professional intellectual twentieth-century revolutionism, and in areas of vague literary non-committalism associated with it, the intellectual, and relatedly, every other, form of human orientation to reality, is anti-reality, except to reality as a private enclosure of human experience: the idea of truth is proscribed as an axiom of a divinity-reality that inflated and mocks the natural ('natural' construed as physical, i.e., bodily) limits of the human mind. And the reality to which there is orientation in the poetry area is a proposition, adopted in surviving superstitious belief in poetry's holding keys to secret potencies magically resident in words: language is nothing but what is made out of it. The new afflatus of fascination with poetry pays obeisance to a reality imaginatively generated for enjoyment of a private sense of reality not answerable to objective standards of the real—that is, to truth-dictates of the mind. This post-poetic poetry corresponds with the conversion of human identity into a physical privacy of self-confirming sensations that has accompanied the conversion of their world by human beings into a world of bodies, from a world that was at least a world of souls—bodies bound to the lessening care of minds. Poetry, in the world of all-materialized human identity, becomes a device for elevating



jealously particularized selfhood to a plane of self-consciousness transcending the indiscriminately diversified commonplace level of human individuality in this world. Words, in this poetry, are used, rather than, as in the poetry of other time-worlds, to spiritualize their event-weighted scenes of life and irradiate with life deathly monotones of repetitious event, to construct self-images, for extrusion from the concrete immediacy of a numberless human universality into a realm of placeless imagination.

The poetry of those whom it pleases, now, to use the ideal of innocent meaning of historic poetic dedication—guiltlessness of untruth because of dedication to truth—for a separation of self-existence from the fate of judgement operating in the reason-informed reckonings of the mind-made words (language's ultimatum) posits an alternative, to the poetic ideal, of a metaphysics of abstract physicality. The placeless realm of poetic imagination on the screen of which poet-refugees from traditional poetic ideality now cast shadow-images of selfhoods to double as veritable identities for the originals inextractable from the solidified world of human bodiliness is the universe of mind that the human universe of body nullified to disembarass the human of conformity with anything but itself. Into that void of denied indivisible being and intelligence, energies of self-insistence project semblances of poetic word-life. They are shows of spirit, but the spirit is a bodily emanation that proves nothing but transient truths of the existence of self to self. Poetry occurs in this human day as an acrobatics of spiritual pattern performed on a language-stage that swallows the performances into itself, disappearing itself in their disappearance. We have been told, more and more frequently, by protagonists of this poetry of self-exhausting authenticity that "poetry makes nothing happen", a favored saying of Auden's appropriated from a passage in my book *Anarchism Is Not Enough* (1928) altogether different in its import there from the gross immoral ineffectuality that the Auden interpretation bestowed on poetry.

As I have indicated, I am moved to dwell on the body-mind crisis in which the human identity-sense has become entangled with special reference to the effect of the crisis on the poetic intuition of the resolution that language makes possible of opposition arising between the body-element and the mind-element of the human constitution, to interfere with perfect composure of the human identity-sense. In no other quarter of human consciousness of the body-mind problem has so much potency been assigned to words as instruments of peace between the bodily and the mental forces of human will. In that potency, mind had a lead of recognized ultimate authority to which bodily dispositions must ultimately yield a finality of priority.

Poetry provided a means of entrance upon an immediate course of endeavor to unite the particularities of bodily experience and the generalities of the mind's experience of the extensions of intelligence into a progressive realization of an ideal being-identity, the human and the universal meanings converging towards truth-sameness. The poetic hope was but hope; but coinciding stresses of the human and the universal resounded in it. And there were some joys of knowing the savor of the perfect in word-offering to the providential benevolence of the language-sponsoring mind that the human heeds at every turn of new prompting felt to be the different particularity in nature, possessing extension in mind-form, a love of the universal in the little of speaking concentration.

What has come to pass for poetic word-offering is a poetry of self-extinction by the human as an intent of the universal being-potency. Human rejection of human identity as a 'given' leaves human beings nothing to know, discover, be, but what they pragmatically 'are'. The poetry that celebrates this pragmatism preaches a religion of self-creation. But it is the intent of the human with regard to itself with which it has become obsessed: to appropriate itself to itself. The poetry of this fanaticism has a false seeming of purposeful fidelity to the human. It is a purposeless fanaticism of severance of the human from its investedness with a universality of nature in the form of mind that constitutes the problem of being human. The religious method of dealing with the problem placed the mind-element of human being at an awesome distance from the bodily elements, identifying the attribute *mind* as the Divine, and defining the mind-factor in human identity as a crucial point of impact of the human and the distant—the distant yet all-pervading reality knowing itself in the large, the human knowing it in the language of the particularizing truth-enactments of human minds.

The religious pattern of relationship between a Divine or Cosmic and a localized, humanly personal, presence of mind in the being of being rests on a distinction between the two orders of identity, divine and human, that treats the bodily element of human nature as tending to predominate in it. Transcendence of the bodily limits of consciousness is achievable, in the religious view of the human body-mind problem, not by the virtue of the capabilities of the powers of mind of extensive consciousness-presence: the human mind remains dependent on mind-in-the-large for access to understanding's full. Religious prescriptions of modes of human attainment to ultimate perfection in the state of being named 'mind' have varied endlessly. But in all a rule of human conditionedness by the bodily element of human nature has qualified the potency of the human mind as a complete state of being.



The emphasis put in the religions on the force of the bodily in the human make-up has conspired with a partiality towards the bodily in the human sense of self—the body felt as refuge from the unknowns confronting human experience of mind. Religious exhortations to consciousness of the supra-bodily have acted, thus, as a perennial reminder to the human, of human bodiliness—of body as a state of being competing in reality with mind.

The philosophies have argued an impersonal mind-identity as a natural human property. They have treated the line of division drawn in the religions between human intellect and a cosmic mind-presence (divinity seen as a 'thinking thing') as nullified in the translation of personally engendered thought into a language of universal reference—philosophy itself conceived of as its founding fashioner. Philosophic depersonalization of human identity as mind-centered left the bodily element out of intellectual consideration, where religious underlining of the body as a contradiction of the human state of being as a state of mind left human consciousness continually arrested in embarrassed sense of a difficult-to-place mind-identity. Other schools beside those of religion and philosophy have provided disciplines of counsel on human dealing with the body-mind problem, but they stem, all, from these two. Philosophy itself, indeed, stems from religion as a wisdom-vocation, a departure in the direction of specialized preoccupation with the functioning of human beings as minds. In religion, concern with the body-mind problem has been fixed upon an image of the human being as concretely existent; personal reality is attached to it, but body, rather than mind, is the site of this reality. As I have described, philosophic postulation of human identity seats it in its aspect as *mind*: there is no character of personhood in the identity. Philosophic depersonalization of mind as a state of being corresponds with philosophic treatment of the state as one of disembodiment. In neither religion nor philosophy does the relationship between body and mind, in the coming into being of human figures of being-identity, find recognition as eloquent of a crux of interaction between reality as existent effect of itself and reality as the self-substantiating real.

Both religion and philosophy present the dilemma of body and mind as the essence of the human problem of self-identification. Religion teaches only a practical solution: that of identification of itself by the human with the bodily state of being in the mortal immediate, the state of being as mind left to a providential eternity to bestow on the soul as mind-aspiring survivor of the bodily. Philosophy defers the problem in its body-mind entirety to an ideal ultimate resolution in which the conflicting identities are negated by a supervening mind-identity transcending the human state of being as mind.

In both religion and philosophy, that is, there is no doctrine of a presence of personal unity in reality—a presence of reality to and in itself; in both, divinity is a concept of the finally real removed from any personal immediacy of truth-identity, removed, in philosophy, in endless time, and removed, in religion, in endless space. The human sense of mind-presence in a reality of all-immediate being has hungered after tokens of participation in living, personally immediate word-events. But neither religion nor philosophy has brought the personal reality of human mind-presence and the necessary presence to itself of reality as the consummate necessary fact of being into the eventful consonance of mind-identity of human speaking and the rhythms of truth with which reality, as a thinking all, reverberates, in an ever-instant self-communion.

Human beings in their nature as minds have been subjected by themselves, in their nature as bodies, to schooling in their mind-identity. The schools of religion and philosophy have been staffed by human beings who assume, as selflessly devoted to the cause of human understanding of what it means to be 'human', an authority as of neutral knowledge, a position of non-partisanship towards the human assuring the trustability of what they recommend as the right in knowledge, or the true belief. Learning in the large, attainment to knowledge satisfying the mind-breadth of human consciousness, took the form, from the beginnings of consciousness in human beings of possessing mind, of *being* minds, of bodily uneasiness towards the direct exercise of their intellectual powers. One may think of those who have assumed the responsibilities of instructing other human beings in their responsibilities of mind as moved by pride of mind to break with the conglomerate human actuality hiding in conglomerate human ignorance from fear of the consequences of personal claiming the prerogatives of human intelligence. At any rate, the history of philosophic and religious contribution to the stimulation of human beings in their bodily mass as individually potent minds comprises much self-exaggerating display of potency in general knowledge and understanding, besides an indeterminable amount of desire to share with fellow-minds the possibilities of liberation from the strictures of bodily ignorance by natural miracles of human intelligence. May one not think, with historical reasonableness, that the conglomerate human actuality in its historical substance as 'Society' has defended itself against total dependence on philosophic or religious instruction (or both in intellectualized mixture) by resort as to a conglomerate mind of its own that has gone by the name of 'Common Sense'? This common sense is a property of common physicality, not of common participation in the capacious



state of being that the possession of minds opens to human physicality. But there is a health of economy in what common sense implies: it curtails the waste of physically *and intellectually* profitless intellection. It may be sensibly—not just common-sensibly—regarded as a process ensuring physical survival of the human form of being (up to a point at which other than physical survival became the test of being-value) comparable to the evolutionary survival-principle attributed to biological nature.

## 2

The full story of human travails of dealing with the body-mind problem of discovering the exact nature of human identity (the reality of mind at the heart of the problem) is not confinable within the pattern of historical analysis I have sketched. Besides the overseership exerted in matters of mind by schools of religious and philosophic teaching, in their varying proportions of social influence, and the common-sense disposition of the human understratum to resist total subjection of mind to recognized thinking authority, there have everywhere in the world of human society filtered down from the intellectual overstratum into the collective consciousness of the social body simplified versions of scholastically established doctrine, to become, there, the material of the socially organized forms of common sense that came to be called 'politics'.

Politics is a common-sense secularization and vulgarization, and homogenization, of philosophic and religious intellectual ponderings on the body-mind problem. It faces towards the physical concerns of a society, the bodily interests of its members, while using some of the rhetoric of the elevated zeal of philosophic or religious intellectuality as token of social seriousness. I am going to consider how the body-mind problem figures in the preoccupations of literature as it does most intricately and crucially in poetry. But I am moved to pause upon the peculiarity of politics of seeming to have a moral affinity with philosophy, and with religious thought especially. Politics occupies a level to which the interests of the members of a society rise from the individually self-protective to those of concern for them as constituting a society—beings living in relations of dependency on one another as a unit of interconnected parts for the well-being of all. Yet politics, besides representing a 'higher' level of interests than that of bodily selfhood, is also a dividing-line of neutral ground between the functioning of human beings as mind-centered in their identity as such and their functioning as physically localized—and, relatedly, socially localized, political—identities. It is to this ground, this line or level, that the interests of human beings as mind-cen-

tered beings drop when they feel daunted by what pursuance of these interests requires of them. It is an area of qualified retreat, or indeterminate refuge, from pursuance of such interests, resolution of the body-mind problem seeming beyond achievement. It passes for an area in which adopted positions can do service as moral substitutes for final human positions—positions of mind-authenticated truth. But political positions are positions of bodily orientation framed allegorically as of implicit intellectual and spiritual validity.

Political thought is a form of ratiocination in which the operations of the mind are constricted to the life-circumstances of human beings as inhabitants of a society conscious of themselves as such. Under the influence of social self-consciousness, they can enact themselves to themselves as beings who are centrally and especially beings of mind, by endowing the social landscape with a figurative universal significance—using the brush of political allegory upon it to give moral coloring to their propositions. In literature, products of purposeful desire to voice human experience by the mind-measure of a real outstripping the reaches of time-and-space confinements of consciousness, much passes, and has passed, as humanly adequate that expands experience-consciousness by making the social scale of time-and-space perspective seem symbolic of the timeless-spaceless scale of experience lived full-mindedly. Here, the illusion of a moral equivalence of a social and a universal scope of interest-reference can be far more forcefully induced than in exercises of political imagination. In poetry especially, of the literary kinds, the claim of full-voiced experiences of eloquent consciousness of an experience-background of timeless time, spaceless space, can inject bodily stress into the words for effects of broad delivery, as from a point in a social midst at which utterances wing out in ever-widening circles of significance. Walt Whitman's gigantic democratic vision of the sublime, wreathed in redundant clouds of fellowship-transcending fellowship, is a hymn celebrating human bodiliness in a music of moral fraternity that converts poetry into religiose political scripture. Robert Frost used poetry as a rhetoric of moral tribute to the sanctity of human strength of mind—the mind, a self-dramatizing public extension of human bodily individuality.

Generally, in the late phases of poetic activity in this century, devices of presenting human experience of the universal real in terms of qualified universality and qualified reality have multiplied beyond the limits of political, social, moral categories of rhetorical seriousness. There has come to prevail a rule of stylistic diversity that reduces the possibilities of far-flung poetic voicing of the content of human experience to those of personal manner-



ism—each varying exhibit of this dubbed 'a voice'—a representation (in its own right, as the pointedly pointless saying goes) of what is entitled to classification as 'poetry'. These exhibits claim to achieve poetic evocations of 'the real' in the sense that 'the real' and 'the human' are *poetically* identical. Each poet offers a special exemplification of this identity in the manner in which he poeticizes *his* experience of *his* individual humanity. Poetry thus launched into performance stops short designedly in incompleteness. The poet does not feel committed to take the poetic voicing, in any poem-occasion, beyond the bounds of his personal sense of reality: the universal, in this poetic dispensation, is the abstract of innumerable personalized universals—each poet dealing with body-mind problem contexts peculiar to *his* universal. In consequence, poetic dealing with the problem as the general problem of human identity is successful individual deferring dealing with it. It occurs in enclaves of private experience treated as illustrative of what the humanly real is 'like'. The body-mind problem loses reality, in this engagement in poetry as private experimenting in the possibilities of universalized consciousness. So much burden is put on words as tools of consciousness-experimentation that language ceases to be, for the poet, the mind's instrument of evaluative identification of actual consciousness-experience: they are used as they seem physically manipulatable, and the processes of mind for the identification of which they are used themselves take on semblances of physicality. What is the nature of this poetry in which the dominant force in the adoption of the use of language that came to be characterized as poetic is shifted from its historic orientation to humanness as a state of being voicing itself from the life-place of the mind?

In an essay I have written in recent time, of the title 'Twentieth-Century Change in the Idea of Poetry, and of the Poet, and of the Human Being', I point to an alteration, become increasingly manifest in the century, in the conception of poets of themselves. Although, in the historical course of human engagement in poetry, poets have been, predominantly, male human beings in bodily identity, they have conceived of themselves as, ideally, representatively human. But the ideal identity suffered, as a generalization, of blanks of unreality, that remained unfilled. I describe certain twentieth-century trends of heightened stress on personal identity as drawing force from a new self-consciousness in male human beings of their maleness as a concrete identity-basis. I read the humanistic individualism of twentieth-century brand, which has manifested itself distinctively in the new forms that poetic sensibility has taken (besides generally in the customs of thought and behavior peculiar to the century as constituting a historically unique course

of human happenings) as the obverse of Renaissance humanistic individualism. *That* was romantic innovation introduced into the inheritance of traditions of intellectual—philosophic and religious—dealing with the body-mind problem, and the liberties of personal confronting of it that literary custom countenanced. *This* is an arbitrarily realistic severance of the individual century human being from the past continuous human endeavor to deal with body-mind problems as inseparable from the necessities of the state of being human. The prescriptions of twentieth-century realism are those of a corporealized conception of human identity. The mind of a human being is construed as a feature of a kind of corporeality classified as human, with the body-mind problem of ponderous past human concern lifted from the shoulder of human identity by a humanism best describable as scientific, according to the counter-intellectuality of Science—counter to the linguistic thought-methods of philosophy and religion, and the intellectually direct linguistic address of historic literary preoccupation with the demands of human consciousness.

As if in final disposing of the body-mind problem as a torturing infliction by human beings upon themselves, science has brought the question of the 'real', that has unremittingly teased human consciousness, within the tight enclosure of the physically explorable, identifiable 'real'—to the extent of arguing from the premise of a self-evident necessity of the physical as containing the substance of knowledge, even as the body contains the mind. Thus, for Science, with whatever qualms of spiritual conscience some scientists may be troubled, the secret of the universe, of its 'origin', lies within the range of physical discovery. While allowing with a touch of romantic humanistic sentiment that ultimate knowledge of the secret may elude intensest prosecution of physical inquiry, scientists do not stop trying. Emphasis on the physicalities may be seen as an intellectually healthy renouncing of metaphysical ritual and formalistic reverence-paying to the ideal. But twentieth-century realistic treatment of the body-and-mind make-up of the human being has gone beyond the crisis-mark of a long overdue house-cleaning of human mental life, re-ordering of the intellectual processes of human consciousness. The fact of mind itself has been deleted in twentieth-century revision of the idea of the human being. There no longer presides in the minds of human beings, as the naturally given and accepted, a co-ordinate sense of themselves as having concentrated in themselves a quality of being conforming to the whole nature of being as necessarily all-extendible, universal. The idea of the human being has become the idea of a transcendence of animal identity in individual identity, a *personalized* physicality.



As the psychology of human personality has reduced human intellectuality to the mechanism of brain-centered co-ordination of the processes of physicality, as consciously *and* unconsciously engaged in, this science's taking over the functions of the mind as the agent of human understanding and self-understanding, and responsibility and self-responsibility, so has the giant Science into which the physical and material aspects of existence have consolidated themselves taken over the entire field of human knowledge as its province. The universe constituted of the physically and materially observable has been universalized in identity as the all-containing sum of the factors of being—even as one finds, in psychological and neurological nomenclature, the identificatory convenience 'brain/mind', for courtesy-paying to the physical organ as the functional seat of what has been generalized—mythologically glorified—under the name 'mind'. The literalistic sense of male human beings of themselves as of male identity that I have found to be generally in the ascendant in twentieth-century mannerisms of consciousness (the propagandist swelling of feministic activity taking its cue of self-assertive individualism from the predominance in men of a new bodily sense of their maleness as against the vague, impersonal sense of their humanness of varied intellectual inheritance) is relatable to the drive of realistic particularity that has empowered scientific intellectuality. This giant robot has taken over more and more of the body-mind problem of human identity, and human life-effectiveness, and broken it down into supposedly separately solvable problems.

I believe, however, that the crucial scene in the contemporary drama of human loss of hold upon the body-mind problem as indispensable to the human sense of identity—of the meaning of being 'human'—is that of the self-contradictory treating of the problem in poetry as personally confronted, verbally, but only in abstract principle, intellectually. Scientific intellectual strategy deals with the problem by ignoring it as humanly real. The strategy that has become standard poetic intellectuality in twentieth-century literary thought and practice deals with the problem by ignoring the reality of language as the instrument of the voicing of the universal that made poetry the human scene of language-love. That it has become the scene of a rampant literary specializing in self-love sets before us revealingly the self-spoliation of human beings as beings of an ingenerate universal identity. In no other scene of deliberately engaged-in activity, of immediate human times, is the neglect of what is portended in the nature of human nature enacted with so confident an air of personal achievement. Twentieth-century humanism has manufactured a bodily version of human identity, and a

version of poetry that allows it to speak from the stage of a fictive version of mind with sound-effects of universality of meaning-scope. The poetic scene reproduces vividly the reduction of the real that human beings have found themselves inhabiting in varying modes of understanding and misunderstanding into a theatre enclosing human consciousness self-reverberatingly within itself.

The 'media', the vastly complex 'communication' systematics, are the physical accoutrements of this theatricality. The apparati of the more inward world of poetic performance are lodged in its intellectual soul, which is stilled now within a poetics of word-sound. Poetry now is an honorary relic of the body-mind problem, reminding of it vaguely, flattering the residual sense of human identity as of a significance traditionally called 'spiritual'. It persists; as a grave of itself.

Which is not to say that in poetry lay the solution of the body-mind problem. It brought the problem into conjunction with the problem of truth. It gave expression to a haunting surmise in the minds of human beings that what they *said*, what they thought *out* from themselves, matters beyond the near bodily reaches. Poetry manifested the living sense of human beings of themselves as possessed of a mind-potency of far reach. It gave space in the linguistic map of being to the idea of the human being as having a universal aspect.

### 3

It ought to be possible, now, to characterize succinctly what has happened to that manifestation of the human instinct of destinedness, in being what is called 'human', of which poetry became the express form. The working of the instinct in the constitution of human intelligence was, first, responsive to the pressures of the physical fact of individual selfhood upon the intelligence in its first phases. The intelligence, though distinguishable as mind, in these phases, must have been only limitedly differentiable from body. The beings affected with recognition of their presence in an unlimited reality of being must be presumed to have initially understood this experience as an *additional* factor or state of being: a bodily propensity so to understand it is persistently evident in the history of human attitudes to humanness—and has become standardized opinion in our own times.

The human experience of existence as mind-experience, which constitutes the difference of being human amidst the unlimited life-forms of physical nature, becomes known to the human life-forms from the vantage of bodily sensations. Bodily instinct of something more than what the bod-



ily frame of life holds of the livable introduces the personal actuality of humanness to itself. But the life-form of the human being is essentially that of mind-being living as a mind. Human beings, beings so-called, do not exist in full living reality as minds when mind has for them mainly a character of additionality, a something more than a primary fact of bodily existence. Intelligence subsumed in bodily existence as an extension of itself cannot amount to much more than elaborations of the bodily processes and powers—the body embracing the mind-potential as reinforcement of its existence-means.

Only where, when, as the bodily life-form of the human being yields its dimensions of personal identity—its being-space, being-scene—to the workings of the intelligence can there be definitive realization of the identity 'human'. Only in the transmutation of the bodily sense of self into self-being in the form of mind can there be attainment to the state of invariable being that the idea of 'life' evokes. Vision of attainment to the whole reality of living humanly has attended the consciousness of human beings from the earliest to the latest of the historical succession of experiments in living humanly called 'times'. The vision has presented itself in fluctuations of the cast of human identity between that of the self of bodily form and the self-form of mind: as playful soul-dramas of myth or tragic soul-dramas of religious absolutes. What has been the part of the human instinct that manifested itself in what is called 'poetry', in all this intertwining of body and mind in putative forms of soul-unity?

Poetic sensibilities appreciated the tremendousness confronting the mind to be known, understood. They apprehended the wondrously unique nature of the mind. They envisioned a mind as a person, a person confronting immensity in natural presence to it—persons, minds, humankind. These sensibilities, while emphasizing the marginality of the state of being we know as mind to the bodily state, and reflecting thus a 'primitive' stage of human intuition of a livable largeness of being, the possibility perceived as at some remove yet distinct, remained a pivotal resort for human beings to confirmation of the reality of their being beings of mind as well as of body. This pivotal experience of self-acquaintance is a point of merging of body and mind in momentary consciousness of self-identity. It is also the point at which mind must take crucial possession of the sense of identity, of selfhood, for the impact of the universal upon the bodily organism to be retained as part of the intelligence that distinguishes mind from body, in this 'human' form of being—a form of being different from all others by the body-mind difference.

For consideration of poetry, the human instinct manifesting itself through sensibilities that precipitate utterance of the kind identified as poetic, the issuance of words as the action of human minds as persons must be weighed. For words are event-substance of this action. The peculiarity of poetry as a distinct linguistic mode is in the character that poetic utterance has as springing in and from minds, differently from all other verbal utterance, of *event*: a mind is delivering up energy of personal being into the great all of being, the all-present, as a responsive presence. There is something seeming nearly body-like, an openness to life-experience as an unlimited expanse of happenings, in the quality of poetic apprehension. It is a quality as of freshly stirred intelligence, as the poetic linguistic mode has an effect of breaking with the habitual in word-use, of being more alive, actively annunciative of participation in the real of being.

Yet, historically, poetry has had enveloped in it superstitious prejudices against linking itself definitively with the mind as the poet's personal base. A hard case of avoidance of decisive placement of human identity-sense is lodged in it. Although poetry provided a ground for utterance-giving to human awareness of a mission, in the fact of mind-having, of verifying the intuitions of humanness of a reality of all-present being, itself of mind-nature, it has served only as a place apart, in the isolation of humanness in itself, for ceremonial testifying—not to the all-extensive, vastly persuasive, reality of reality but—to the secludedly familiar, privately eloquent reality of the reality of the human mind to itself. This place of withdrawn presence from the human island-world of body-moved presence in the universe of mind-moved being has served as a site of secrecy wherein confidences are published as between minds meeting under the protection of truth-armored words. But they have done no more than give conscience-comfort to minds suspended in the neither-nor poetic being-place. The words of these confidences do not pass though the walls of the close chambers of poetic utterances or the thick air of the poetic precinct of impetuous thought held in tight rein.

The curiosity of poetry as an uncommon form of language-employment, radically distinct from all other kinds of employment of it, is in its being responsive to the most insistent demand of the human mind upon itself, which is to confess and claim its unity of being with the being-entirety that mind knows as mind. Poetry accepts assignment to a status of linguistic and human and universally absolute importance, and relegation, by the same stroke, in such classification of it, to the status of the experimentally illustrative, tentative, shadowy representation of what can be offered as self-evident truth. The identity 'poetry' or 'poetic' carries the *proviso*: 'This typifies



the best expectancy of the human mind of itself of the ultimate in decisive knowledge, the perfect in comprehensive understanding.' That is, the vision of the 'best' achievable in word-form that has been harbored and nurtured under poetry's name is the last-beyond-the-last chance of redemption of the human by the human from ignominies of human self-despite. But the mandate of best expectancy that poets gave themselves in honorary behalf of the speaking human totality—whose mouths propel meaning this way and that, whose ears receive meaning with greed and suspicion uniting to play the part of mind—has hidden the vision of the ultimate immediate of true-spoken being in improvised permanencies. Speakers, writers, of poetry, hearers and readers, have satisfied, rather than the demands of their minds, the demands of their times, which is to say, the agreements made between the most opinionated of a time as to what is best for treatment for the time being, as the best as speech of truth. So it has come about that poetry, the place in human life sheltered as the mind's ultimate own from bodily fortuities, has been transmuted in time on time of temporary poetic timelessness into a perpetuity of temporariness. Our time has seen a bodifying of words in all the language-places. This has resulted in a general view of language as flawed by the indeterminacy of words as physical properties, and, in poetry, in a remedy for language's failure in a language of poetry artfully extracting a mental 'best' out of the physical properties of words.

I have written on the failure of poetry, and renounced poetry as being inspired by premonitions of possibilities of fulfilling the truth-potentialities of language within its special compass of language-care. I have not regarded language as a failure as a provision for the utterance of thought formed with the mind's supervising truth-care. In my finding poetry to have failed, I have never ceased to bless the historic fact of poetry; to bless the urgency in the human apprehension of the possible that produced the linguistic oddity of a kind of speech in which the spoken told of a speaking we mean to speak, we being what our minds mean us to be. But poetry could only provide special occasions for exhibiting appreciation of the ideal of the linguistic good. There are no bearings provided for the achieving of this in poetry itself. It is a place made for speaking of a kind for which no place has been made in the habits of speech that human beings have formed to make place in their life-plan for their speaking-needs, to compensate for their failure to conform their habits of speech to the sum and essence of their speaking needs as needs of the mind of themselves as beings of mind.

Poetry, then, has served as a religious supplementation of human language-practice: it was designed to enlarge the scope of habitual human

speaking, which takes its bearings from the plan of human speaking-life that the mind provides but follows it only fitfully. It is an area of supererogatory speaking that notifies of the failure of the human speaking-habitual, spelling a faith in the possibility of a full-speaking human language-life. Yet the ultimate of human linguistic success is never more than fitfully adumbrated in poetry itself.

Between the fitfulness of the linguistically successful in the poetic use of language and its occurrence in habitual speaking, there is the difference between the character of utterance deliberately formulated to fulfil to the contextually possible the truth-will of the mind and the character of utterance involuntarily—naturally—jected into the habitual human speaking-mixture of bodily and mental contextual influences. In the habitual course of human language-practice, the marginality of importance of mind-moved utterances is overcome by spontaneity of utterance. In poetic utterance-modes, there can be no such self-precipitating naturalness. And herein is the key to the question of the failure of poetry as a rebounding of the mind's natural speaking-will against a background of failure in the human speaking-habitual to give adequate place to the human speaking-natural. Poetic speaking must take its bearings for the formation of its contrived natural from what the habitual course of human speaking provides of indication of the working principles of the mind as the internal director of the speaking-processes. When, in these processes, the natural internalities of speech-formation are overwhelmed by the externalities of utterance-habitudes, and the human instinct of the completely human loses its central identity-bearings, poetry's *raison d'être* is extinguished in the general human loss of sense of language's *raison d'être*. There is no emergency to deal with but the total speaking-emergency; there is no language-failure but the total failure of human minds to think and speak by the living rule in them of the natural.

My thesis is that the human in our time has been overcome by the failure of the human in its vital functioning as human—which I read as its speaking constitution; and that only direct address to the body-mind problem in the form of a total linguistic naturalization of the habitual in speaking could save the human to itself and to the universe as speakers in it of the reality of mind—the reality of its substance as mind.

## 4

No thinker of past time took so much pains of thought in addressing his mind to the body-mind problem as did Spinoza. He was an 'original' thinker; he began in his thinking with his own thought. He tried to proceed, from this



point of beginning, to the utmost of his own awareness of himself as a mind, a thinking organism—an awareness comprising awareness of himself as a body, an organism of physically distinct parts functioning in composite relation to external action upon it productive of variously distributed effects upon it and itself capable of effects-producing external action. His care to go, in his undertaken task of using his awareness of himself as a mind to trace the course of truth, only where and as far as his mind-nature allowed him to assume himself to be truly in a course of thought, placed upon him a severe limitation of what he conceded to *human* capability of thought. The human mind shared identity of being with a body subject to varying physical conditions and circumstances by its own physicality, where mind-nature was self-ruled, subject to its own conditions. But Spinoza was circumspect in his attribution of mind-nature to human beings, never treating their mind-nature as altogether separable from their body-nature. Though in their mind-nature, they partook for him of the perfect, the real—the Nature of universal being-completeness (which Spinoza reluctantly denominated ‘God’ at times, to maintain as much community [as possible] in his reference-identifications between his thinking and the historically habitual in human thought)—in their body-nature they partook of the nature of the material universe of particularized existence, conditioned by what he called ‘extension’. While Spinoza’s concern in its emphases was, with rigorous consistency, with the responsibilities of human beings with respect to their mind-nature, and, most emphatically, with the nature of mind as the consummate property of the perfect, the real, in being (“God is a thinking thing”), he was equally rigorous in keeping to the fore, in his considerations, the obstacles to perfect success in their functioning as minds under which human beings labored in their functioning also as bodies.

Spinoza did not conform to the institutional practice of philosophy of removing the mind-identity of the human being into intellectually isolated abstraction from the fact of human partaking of corporeality. Nor did he conform to the institutional practice characteristic of religions of viewing the human being as so much weighted down by bodiliness that the question of the transcending of bodily sense of being to the sense of being with which the mind could be animated was itself a gulf perilously separating the two parts of human nature. More than any other thinker on the problem of human identity, of either philosophic or religious intellectual cast, Spinoza trained his mind on defining the component subjects of the problem with the utmost possible linguistic exactitude—not in an Aristotelian spirit of categorical systemization but in a spirit of broad inclusiveness of scope of

subject-elements of the problem. As I have written elsewhere, he pictured the characters of the drama of living being—the ‘parts’ making up the drama’s whole story-subject—without attempting to delineate what the dramatic course of action, or event, might be. He forswore forming with his definitions a comprehensive structure of doctrinal explanation of the problem. He generalized as to what being is, essentially, being as inhering in perfection of being, equatable with Nature as illimitable completeness of being, and generalized as to the human form of being distinguished by its subjectness to modification, differently from the perfect being-constant humanly typified as ‘God’. But he drew a fast line between defining the components of universal existence from the point of view of human participation in it and defining the relationship between the human form of being and the perfect being-exemplification that prompted the notion of divinity. He avoided commitment to any account-giving of possible actualities of direct, dramatic, impingement on each other of the divine ‘thinking thing’ and human efforts to understand ‘existence’, and the participation of human beings in it as, themselves, thinking things.

While thinking and writing with intensive amplitude of reference to a divinity-identity of persistent notional presence to the human mind, and with studious evaluation of the human experience of distinct identity, he treated the drama, the story, of what enactments might be depicted or told, of courses of relationship between the two identities, as absorbed in an incompleteness of itself forestalling conclusive depiction, certitudes of final truth. The Spinozan telling is of a universe of being in which its inhabiting speaking minds have not yet or yet or yet achieved an intelligible consciousness of occupation of it, and of themselves as occupants of it. The failure might be deduced, from Spinoza’s depicting of the problem of human adequacy of intelligence of the nature of being, human and universal, to be a failure of achievement of mutuality of identity between the human mind and the mind-nature of universal being identified, in human speaking helplessness, by the unidentifying name-gesture of ‘God’. Spinoza proposes nothing of immediate potency for dealing with the body-mind problem. The drama, story, he presents is one of fluidity in the state of the human being as actively related, by the fact of its being a state of mind, through the mind-nature of the human being, to the state of being in its universal proportions as a state of mind, through the necessarily total mind-nature of being perfect, indivisible, in perfect, indivisible, presence in itself. I regard the Spinozan pattern of description and definition for dealing with the body-mind problem as of a beautiful intellectual integrity, revealing at once,



within the framework of the pattern, the all-embracing scope of the problem and its being a continuously unsolved one. In such description and definition, there was only recommendable what was practically applicable as *Ethics*: the facing, by human beings, of ever-immediate bearing-in of the problem in human circumstance as an unsolved problem, and the providing of mental safeguards for interim endurance of evident inadequacies in their competence as minds.

Spinoza's programme of ethical time-biding differs in its practicalities from the moralistic socio-political reductions of the problem I have described, in which the part of mind in human identity undergoes translation into a mentally-tailored body-orientated language. These purport to deal with the problem with sufficient practical immediacy to relieve minds of philosophic or religious sense of urgency in its regard. His programme differs also from the prescriptions of the philosophies and the religions. It promulgates nothing, but implies the natural necessity of an ultimate resolution of the unresolved factors of the problem. Between human mind-nature and the mind-nature of being as a universal existent there can be no determinate disparity: mind-being is not a variable, as body-being is.

I have dwelt on Spinoza's study of the nature of the human being-state because he placed the body-mind problem at the center of his interest, and made the general, prime objective of human beings that of perfecting themselves as beings of mind (sobriety the key to dealing with their bodily nature to their best advantage as such). The fulfilment of their being-reality as beings of mind was inseparable, for him, from recognition of the human mind's vital connection at its purest with the mind of being, the wholly pure mind of being in its pure wholeness. While lending this total mind, this total being, the character of divinity, he did *not* personalize the rhetorical identification. 'God' was not presented as intervening in the human predicament of dual nature as a rescuing resource or reliance. The justifying of human identity as partaking of the universal nature of being was not, in his book of reality, by a process of beneficence visited upon the human state from the height of divine all-understandingness, all-knowingness, but by a process of self-justifying by human beings of themselves through and in mind-transcendence of their limitations as bodily beings. He pictures the course of attainment to successful exercise of the powers of mental being as a gradual one, in personal experience, and in human destiny at large, envisaging historical necessities of delay in general human maturing to mind-perfectness. The individual course of maturity outlined by him comprised care to reinforce the mind with 'clear and adequate ideas' (a standard phrased by

Descartes, with whose thought Spinoza was not in the whole at ease). Spinoza especially recommended the cultivation of what he denominated a 'third kind of knowledge', beyond the illuminations of imagination and those of reason, drawing on intuitive speeds of direct penetration of the essence of the knowable.

I have found this Spinozan stand on the practical possibilities of human understanding of human identity, as of the nature of mind-being, the closest, of the store of preserved exercises in wisdom-pronouncement constituting human intellectual history, to the spirit of intellectual courage and confidence in an ultimate truth-correspondence between the reality-whole of being and human clear and adequate speaking reproduction of it that the venture called 'poetry' has prognosticatively enacted on language's almost self-constructing stage of hope. Even Spinoza's conception of a suitable human mode of disposition to the subject of 'God', 'the intellectual love of God', though it is ideologically fragile and emotionally all-obscure, has, for me, connection with the intellectual love of language to which poetry commits its devotees—language seen as of an intrinsic rightness, in what it *is*, that makes the mind using it for right-speaking's sake use it as if the personal speaking-mind and the internal mind-presence informing language were of an absolute kinship. How human beings, whose identity cannot be construed in terms of merely physical nature and location, place themselves as minds in the expanse of being they inhabit as minds—place themselves in it in relation to what is unidentifiable in it as of physical nature—depends on the dignity they confer on the fact of their possessing mind-nature. The idea of God has much comprised what has been, rather than estimates of degrees of dignity of being-nature conceived of as surpassing the attainable in human being-nature, flat estimates of human being-nature as generally defective in admiration-evoking attributes prompting envisionment of compensating divinity. The idea of a grandeur of total admirableness of being-nature has served to redeem the human value-sense of existence-at-large from the low opinion of human being-nature commonly held, humanly, for all its mental appurtenances of superior creaturehood. Spinoza struck a note of dignity-attribution to human being-nature that equalized it, in the power of thought inhering in *mind* as the determining factor of human identity, with the mind-aliveness thinkably attributable to the universal being-reality.

Such notions as the 'third kind of knowledge' and the 'intellectual love of God' can be, and have been, viewed as features of mystical theorizing—a metaphysical counterpart to scientific factualistic precision. Spinoza was scientifically precise in his observations and assessments of physical actualities,



but he was no scientific dogmatist or philosophical or theological pragmatist or intellectually revolutionary mystic in his dealing with the human-divine dichotomy. As he saw the problem of the disparity of the Godly and the mind-nature of humanness resolved in a determinate gradualness, so was the temper of his idea of mind-nature, as marking unity of being, whether human or universal ('divine') denominatable identity, one of poetic circumspection. I understand the poetic element in the framing of thought to have to do with the mind's concern with the ultimate knowledge-value, truth-effect, of the thought-framing processes. The poetic disposition of the mind is to a looking ahead, in the midst of what immediately presents itself to mental witness, for discovery of how much, in the immediate experience-presentation, dims or blocks the perception of the intelligence—how much the localizing bodily sense of experience limits consciousness to curtailed immediacies of thought. For every poet for whom poetry has been a profession of faith in the possibility of fullness of mind-witness to the full reality of being, such looking ahead has been part of an imperative of intellectual adequacy of expression intuitively accepted as a governing necessity. The instinct conducing to the poetic use of language corresponds with the urgency of mind of such a disciplined patient contemplative thinker as Spinoza, the influence in both cases is towards an extended immediate, a looking-ahead protraction of allowance for supercession of the witness of the fragmentary reality of physical time by witness of the united reality of matured immediacy of matured mind-presence.

Spinoza seems to not have treated the body-mind problem as crucial to the comprehending of both the human state of being and the universal state of being denominated, for purposes of rational distinction, 'divine'. His account of the sameness of Nature and the thinking being of universal mind-identity can be seen as postulating an implicit, necessarily self-effecting transcendence of the physical aspects of the universal—because it is the universal. And one may regard such a view of a universal matter-mind problem as the perspective in which the solution of the body-mind problem of human identity can be prefigured with anticipatory fidelity. I have pointed to a similarity of intellectual conscience between the historic poetic position of mind and Spinoza's attempt to introduce spontaneities of the human intellect into static philosophical and religious doctrinal pieties. The two identities, which he presents in a proximity, of broad and intimate connection, can indeed have place in the mind impressively, as ultimately knowable as a single identity. This relatability of the Spinozan stand of mind to that of poetic sensibility of the possibilities of truth-broad fullness of utterance has nothing to do with

such a philosophic romanticizing of poetry as Heidegger's involving it in his rhetoric of 'primal' being, 'primal' thinking. I cite Spinoza for the practicality of his concerns of thought with the problem of human identity. Poetry has been a way-station of practical concern with the ultimate necessarily linguistic resolution of this problem. As a historian of human travails of mind in relation to the bodily element of human-being and to the universe of being as one of minded being, Spinoza made report of a foreseeable course of approach to the perfecting of thought. Poetry has been a self-repeating historian reporting, ever, a foreseeable course of approach, in the travails of human speaking, to a perfecting of thought-utterance.

The homiletic sense of my giving Spinoza an important part in my story of the body-mind problem as a problem at the heart of the instinct prompting the use of words that formalized itself as poetry is the clarification Spinoza makes in his picturing of human thought-processes of how much is left unfilled by them in the mind's space. Spinozan expectation of eventual filling of the empty spaces follows from his faith in the human mind as mind—in mind as a purity of being destined to be ultimately redeemed from the intervening in it of the partialities of bodily being. Poetry has been the nurturing ground of a general deeply-seated human expectation of possibilities of overcoming the difficulties of the mind in dealing with what is presented to it for entertaining through the powers of language. The map I have drawn of the Spinozan view of the mind's space can serve, with some modification, for the case of poetry as a historical setting in which the body-mind problem figures crucially. The empty spaces in the mind, here, are seen as fillable with supplements to thought providable by language: in the poetic vision of redemptive compensation for human failure in the immediate, in adequate fulfilment of the potentialities of mind-being, language intermediates between thought-lack and anticipatable human success in mind-being. Poetic faith in eventual human survival of the ordeal of the body-mind problem looks to language to empower the mind to elide the blank places of the mind, blocked by bodily appropriations of thought-space in the mind's total range of consciousness. But this leaves unthought thought still to be thought, and puts upon poetry a burden of promise that the immediate moments of poetic utterance cannot fulfil.

Spinoza's temporizing faith in the human identity as of a knowable reality of mind-being, confirmable by thought, did not so much promise as advise. The promise of poetry, which borrows from the promise of language, goes beyond temporizing, and goes beyond faith. It answers to a call in the human mind itself—a call that issues in the powers of language. The call



calls upon the being that is the mind to take open presence in the mind-universe of being. Yet poetry has answered the call with modes of speaking presence in which language is used to enact no more than partialities of mind-being to supplement the immediate in human inadequacy (in being, thought, speaking-presence)—poetic achievement being in the betokening of an ultimate achievable in human adequacy.

My own adoption of poetry as a repository vessel of faith in my sense of mind-presence in a knowable universe of being came early in my early learning of what had forwarded itself from the human past to the human present of understanding of the nature of being human and of the all-enhancing being-reality. I found myself at about 1920, in my nineteenth year, accepting poetry as the single offering of the past that allowed of one's having patience with time as the element of bodily being while making all possible immediate place for the insistencies of mind as the ultimately undismisable. One might describe poetry as the gift of the past of the example of the survival-power of confidence in the success of the human form of being in the universe of being, in the midst of experience in time-on-time of failure of the form to manifest adequately – decisively – that the nature of the identity of which it is the purport is that of *mind*. The characters of the story that poetry has tried to fashion for the enlightenment of the human sense of the human are, in at least ideal dramatic intent, *minds*. Poetry, in the twentieth century, among the legacies of past human consciousness of an identity-significance in being human, still had a force stimulative of an appreciation of the human state as an intellectual, a thinking, state of being. The other legacies, philosophy and religion, along with traditions of learning that had developed under the aegis of these, had, by the time of the new century's opening, lost much of their force as wisdom-resources of the mind. A pragmatic intellectuality of rebellion against formalistic intellectual stand-taking on the side of the mind became the century's wisdom-laboratory. The spirit of the new intellectuality was scientific, its base in the material substance of, the bodily factor in, human experience. The poetic legacy fell under this influence. But my orientation of myself to it was to the traditional implications of the poetic address of mind to experience, not to poetry as liberated from its historic wisdom-function by psychology, science's conversion of mind into a mythical aspect of bodily reality.

The new intellectuality of the twentieth century encompassed in its mood lingering traces of intellectual impatiences in past times with an ultimate unified identity of being knowable only in patient enlargements

of the mind's thought-scope on the ever-abbreviated bodily immediate. Rejection of the idea of a necessary mind-centered unity of being can result in commitment to the idea of human identity as an exclusive order of consciousness, unaccompanied by, unaccompanying, a presumed universally present order of consciousness, an ultimately all-effective law of being. Such dispensing with the relating of human identity to a universal identity of being, of mind-nature, intrinsically, has yielded human disposition of mind that has taken strong hold on modern intellectuality. It makes human identity a unique form of being having the force of a law of being unto itself. This pragmatism of human identity, the conceiving of it as an eccentricity of the universal substance of being referable to nothing but itself, has become the cross-roads point in the traffic of modern human consciousness where its thought-movements converge again and again, to again and again diverge to their body-orientated randomness. It is neither-mind-nor-body meeting-ground; everything, here, is in immediate ambiguity-focus, dissolving into a pseudo-universal environment of pseudo-compatibility. The former antidotes to an apparent impossibility of a universally authenticated human identity – religion, philosophy, and poetry to these as at length curative rather than consolatory – have presence here only as shapes of the pseudo-possible. Under the influence of this mood, poetry took on, as a culturally ambitious exponent of it, a function of radical subversion of what had been its traditional devices of linguistic decorum. The poetry of the new intellectuality was, and is in its succeeding phases as the poetry of the century, the poetry of a human identity-sense limiting the reach of human consciousness to the bounds of a world of human self-experience. The universal scope of being became an outer space irrelevant to that world as the real space of human presence – the world of human being conceived to have the freedom of irrelevancy to the universal proportions of being.

The new poetry of the new century did not spring from a new vision of the human being in the universe of being but from a recantation of the traditional vision. The vision of the new poetry narrowed the human scene of being to an interior universe in which the human being enacted the problem of being human within a defining frame in which meaning and value were centered to standards of personality and intelligence based on the collective private judgements of human beings of what to expect individually, of themselves. The mental temper of the poets of this poetic new age was short-tempered, of a muscular busy-mindedness, intellectually ambitious within short ranges of intellectual ambition. The poetry it fostered was,



though intellectually superficial, verbally energetic, rhetorically serious. It has remained throughout the century, into its last very late phases, essentially a poetry at odds with itself as committed to foreshow what is promised canonically, 'spiritually', in the name and tradition of poetry. It is a poetry — in all its variations of period-peculiarity, from 'modern' to 'modernist', 'post-modernist', 'Movement' specializedness, Feministic doggedness, Masculinistic loose-tonguedness, vocabularistic multifariousness, sophisticated versatility in scene, topic, slant of opinion — of an ironical journalistic everything and an ironical poetic nothing. This nothing is supposed to represent the conversion of poetry from the status of an alternative to religion to the status of an alternative to drama. Religion is for allaying fear, promoting hope. Poetry was for the cultivating of a sense of a kinship between the nature of the human state of being and the nature of the universal state of being. Drama came into being for the familiarizing of human beings with adversities and absurdities attendant on the human state of being. Twentieth-century poetry has been casting itself, with progressive insistent disclaiming of traditional motivations, both classical and romanticist, as the resort of an even-handed sense of human identity. This is a last stand against poetry as a creed, an observance, of a human fealty owed to a universal reality of being of which the human state of being partakes in the reality of mind as the presiding constituent of the state.

When T. S. Eliot wrote "Human kind cannot bear very much reality", the 'reality' in question was not intended to be understood as a distinctly identified quantity—the universal or the circumstantially human order. Reality, for Eliot as the Arch-ecclesiastic of the poetic Reformation, had itself become the Unreal, the realm of the self-cancelling ironies of existence: the poet being, for him, a self-sacrificial exception to human kind in general who could bear contemplation of the ironies with the help of a threnodical wit. The poets of the new poetic dispensation have differed widely in the improving of new styles and forms of poetic diction. But the poetry of the century, in its long run, is weighted heavily with the monotony of intense human consciousness of the human boring in upon the human, unrelieved by any framework of extended consciousness. Philosophic or religious intellectual constructions have engaged the interest of some of the century's poets. But the poetic habit of mind of the century, a literal version of the general human habit of mind become endemic in it, makes the human setting the dramatic universe of such extensions of interest, or sentiment. I believe that this pattern of description of what has happened intellectually, in this century, to poetry and to the historic norm of human attitudes to the

human, accounts for the treatment of the body-mind problem, in the century, as one that has been outlived.

## 5

Science is the pursuit of methods for arriving at exact knowledge of 'what is' by separation of the presumably knowable into fields of particularistic identification. Science eventually developed itself as an alternative to philosophy. Philosophy concerns itself (traditionally) with knowledge-acquiring by elaborations of thought upon a *presumed known*—'what is', as generally known, knowable with some clarity of understanding.

Science conditions itself by positing a presumable knowable set apart from, an unknown element of, 'what is'. The unknown element is avoided as an obstruction to success in the achievement of exact knowledge. Natural to the human mind is presumption of a general knowledge of 'what is': human consciousness does not begin with a sense of limitation of knowledge. Both philosophy and religion draw upon this naturally inborn knowledge. The history of philosophy and that of religion give evidence that there are, indeed, limits set in these to the extent of knowledge aimed at in them. But such limitation does not involve an absolutist division into a presumed distinctly knowable and a presumed generally unknowable.

The limiting factor in philosophical and religious knowledge-exploits is one of personal discretion. In philosophy—as I believe—the promptings of discretion are related to the nature of philosophic knowledge—quest as performed within the boundaries of a special community of experimenters in knowledge-verification in intellectual breadth: fear of adverse judgements from intellectual peers promotes cautionary intellectual restraints here. In religion, I take there to be at work a fear-influence coming directly from a cautionary restraint of self-exposure to unlimited acquaintance with the great knowable what-is whole. There is that in the philosophic and the religious disposition to knowledge that puts them into a certain tactical alliance with science.

There remains a fourth intellectually institutionalized—that is, 'cultural'—kind of manifestation and expression of knowledge-concern. This is 'art'. Art is concerned with a kind of knowledge-experience that, formulated in terms of physical impressions, is designed to excite ideas of supra-physical experience and knowledge in the mind. From its merely decorative level to the level of assumption of powers and ends of sensibility to what lies beyond the crudely discernable and witnessable, art performs a function of representing spiritual intent without direct engagement in experience on a



livingly immediate and articulate spiritual level of activity. The activity of art as one of the culturally sanctioned areas of exercise of the human faculties of knowledge-expression reduces knowledge-experience to a magic-like property of bodily sensations, to reflect realities of experience beyond those that are physically accessible. Part of the satisfaction of art-sponsored activity, and receptive enjoyment in it, is that of supporting make-believe credited with the value of devotion to an implied 'real', and the self-esteem derived from this; part is that of compensating for consciousness of failure to achieve fulfilment of the spiritual impulses and objectives of the mind with distractions rated as enlarging the spiritual appetites. Of the four kinds of publicly recognized and sponsored knowledge-concern that I have specified, art is the most indulgently treated, the least subjected to authoritarian control; individual will in presentation and receptive interest is here the free-est. Because of the liberalized status of art as a cultural agency of institutional authority, it has acquired powerful categorical force as the naming of a kind of knowledge-concern embracing whatever can be endowed, as 'an art', with a character in which physical impression and expression may be interpreted as compounded with spiritual predilections of the mind. Not only music, dance, theatrical display, but poetry, and other specialities of literary form (literature in the whole, indeed!), are commonly assigned, in institutional identity, to the realm of 'art'.

Art, then, of the formally distinguished activities of knowledge-concern, provides a range of private choice in its presentation of experience-material of important human significance that makes it uniquely attractive among them, for those resistant to the impositions—the claims and bonds—of intellectual authority. Its large dependence on the personal physicalities lends it appearances of spontaneity and naturalness peculiar to it as, almost, a domain of autonomous cultural performance. It is more common than uncommon for those engaged in some form of literary activity to bestow upon themselves, and welcome, the identification 'artist'—as if to be rated 'an artist' placed a writer outside the work-fields of the mind in a playground of physical disporting that yielded miracles of bodily versions of thought.

Categories of special knowledge-concern have been added to the primary four, and denominated 'the humanities'—as in the phrase 'art and the humanities', these round out the elementary science-philosophy-religion sum of things. But the 'humanities' are not other than sciences of knowledge-concern with special areas, such as anthropology, political science, sociology, historiography, and psychology, the science of human behavior as the knowledge-material of human eccentricity. The rhetorical linking of 'the

humanities' to 'art' in the curricular geography of modern learning-enlightenment emphasizes the removal of all literary activity from categorization as, generally, of an intellectual order to an area of random rule where bodily sensitivity is the governing index of event. That is, literature has come to be identified as a cultural province of art. The National Endowment programme, in the United States, is divided into two departments, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The awarding of government grants for literary activity is assigned to the Arts departments.

In past time, poetry, with other forms of literary composition, intended for oral delivery, or for reading with quasi-auditory receptivity, has been subject to codes regulating the accidental effects of physical verbliness to produce effects suggestive of inner harmonies of meaning, consistency of thought. Such rhetorically technical preoccupation *did* have a prestige of identification as 'art'. But in poetry, and elsewhere in literary composition, the technicalities of external detail were treated with a piety reflecting an underlying consciousness of the serious responsibility of the literary act in its intellectual whole. It is this conscientious attitude to literary undertaking—of reverential cast in the poetic part of it—that has disappeared from literary undertaking in this century. The identity 'literature' has been subsumed in the identity 'art', art as a form of play to which a certain degree of cultural seriousness can be honorifically attached. What is new in the play-component of twentieth-century literary composition generally, and in poetic composition in marked particular, is a centering of experience to bodily spheres of expression—the adaptation of linguistic form to postures of physical presence to the subjects of composition. The intensities of poetic speech of the new mold are not related to insistencies of the mind. They follow from priority-yielding to the attention-competing force of words in their bodily immediacy as sound and stress quantities.

Play is no longer an incidental component of the poetic linguistic processes. It is the central working-principle of poetic composition. In literary verbal and structural practice in its entirety, a dynamics of play has replaced distinctive literary purposefulness. Literary activity has been made the purpose of literary activity; it consumes itself in enacting itself. This is especially evident in the course of twentieth-century engagement in poetry; the point of poetic composition in the century's later decades has become play-performance of culturally self-proud pointlessness. Poetry has lost its moral character as mind-directed linguistic action to a dominance in poetic diction of styles of utterance duplicating to the rhetorically possible styles of



bodily behavior. The subject-field of poetic expressiveness has been narrowed to one giving room for no more than private attitudes dramatized as lived experience of mind.

In my picturing of twentieth-century human consciousness as locked in loss of a sense of distinction between body and mind as factors in the determination of the nature of human identity—loss of sense of the very make-up of humanness of being—I have brought into view the kinds of human concern with knowledge of 'what is'; and I have repeatedly fixed upon poetry as an area of extreme sensitivity to the possibilities of definitive knowledge-experience beyond the limited reaches of bodily consciousness. When poetry itself becomes halted in [the] mutually stripped-down consciousness that literature has accepted as the cultural model of modernized intellectuality, there stands revealed not only the failure of poetry as the saving grace of human powers of articulate intelligence, but a perilous closeness to failure of the human to make good its identity as human—as a speaking consciousness of 'what is'.

## 6

But if to be human is to be but a teller of 'what is', a messenger to being in the comprehensive large, what is this 'what is' that seems to call for witness, as for confirmation? Question of the relation of human being, particular being possessed of capability of knowledge in the comprehensive large, to being in the comprehensive large has had the haunting form for human minds of a debate, as in a general mind, a debate of being with itself—being, the existent all of being: Who is 'what is'? Is there or is there not a *personal* reality in being? Is there or is there not a centralizing 'I'? The human 'I' found itself caught in a debate that the various forms of human knowledge-concern have distanced from oppressive urgency or moderated in intellectual or moral compromise solutions. The essence of the debate is the body-mind problem; and this has been cast out, in our century's choice of importances, from its status as a question pressing ever undismissibly upon human consciousness for determinate response. The question unites knowledge-experience of the nature of human identity with that of the nature of 'what is'. The exorcising of it from the natural reaches of human consciousness, the narrowing of the consciousness to that of an 'I'-identity of bodily particularity, has reduced the mind's engagement in the processes of thought and the thought-ordering procedures of language to the proportions of bodily sensitivity. The truth-honesties of language no longer have formal representation in literature; and poetry no longer has at least formal moral status as the linguistic field of

honor of the literary conscience. The contemporary verbal stereotype 'creative' reduces the explorative energy of thought traditionally called 'the imagination' to a bodily activity of a vaguely mental character.

In my recognition of the poetic use of words as a circumventing of the distancing that religious knowledge-concern makes between the body and the mind as identity-aspects of the human being, I went further than anyone had gone, I believe, in treating the physicality of words in their personal utterance as transcendible in poetry far more effectively than in other forms of meaning-expressive utterance. In poetry, the personal particularity of the being of the word-uttering moment can exert itself towards neutralizing its physicality for the realizing of the moment as belonging to the timeless continuity of mind-experience. Poetry illustrated the reality of mind as the identity-essence of human particularity and of the omnipresent 'what is'. But illustration misses being exemplification. Poetry could give distinct savor of the enduring experience of the mind-reality of being, but it could not itself be explicit entrance into the experience. It left the resolution of the human and the universal identity problem at the mercy of impersonal chance in linguistic failure and success. I suddenly perceived that the explicit, the exemplifying real, was being displaced, in poetry, from its necessary eventualness by self-repeating illustration. I saw the implicit necessity as fading into neverness in poetry's fragmentary exhibition of the explicit. Others disconnected themselves from the inheritance of the unresolved identity-problems, and made choices of human parts to play from history's innumerable dramatic characters.

Poetry goes on, not what it was, or, yet, anything really new. Everything goes on, not what it was, or, yet, anything really new. But I want to say something more about poetry, in relation to the problem of body and mind and the linguistic ultimate—poetry as the crux in the body-mind problem, where language's mental poise and edge and bodily noise and restiveness dispute with each other in somewhat muffled argument.

Poetry did not bring the body-mind problem into the linguistic open. But in none of the other kinds of knowledge-concern is the cruciality of the problem so strongly reflected. In poetry, there was presented the possibility of speaking out, of saying out, with an eventful effect of achievement, in the very words, of identification of human being as being of the *knowing* kind. But poetic achievement has been fated, by its immediate concern with the self-identification of human beings as knowledge-empowered beings, to assignment of knowledge-realization of the 'what is' to a deferred immediate. And this deferral has forced on poetry the resort to substitutes for



engagement in full, direct, linguistic exercise of the human powers of knowledge-experience. The most heavily drawn-upon of these has been the musical element of bodily sensitivity, in which physical expression of physical experience excites responses of attention, though communicating nothing specifically—though *saying* nothing. The versifying procedures of poetry, including those of 'free verse' and poeticized prose, to varying degrees and in varying ways, play upon the physical features of linguistic expression for quasi-musical effects of exciting attention as to a bodily fact of saying something. The technically poetic characteristics of poetry dramatize the speaking occasion as of a particular human pertinence, but leave its actual significance secreted within the thought-content of what is verbally presented. The most ostensibly poetic, externally evident, marks of the poetic are meaning-mute: they match the unsaid of music.

In the management of linguistic utterance by the imposition on it of patterns of rhythm and intonation, there is introduced into it a reliance on the compulsive character of bodily instinct, to strengthen the mind-prompted meaning-course of the words as chosen on the basis of the mind's guidance. In all physical nature, the course of occurrence manifests tendencies to the compulsive in action and reaction. Physical nature's patterning of the particulars of the course may be described as a self-maintaining principle of necessity, as an automatic generator of continuities: this follows upon that. But in non-physical, non-composite, nature, being as mind, the ever-immediate continuity of 'what is', the compulsive character of physical occurrence is transcended. The course of occurrence is thought, the living principle of free being, indivisible reality. Poetry, as engagement in the exercise of the human powers of mind concentrated in forms of linguistic expression, makes the individual word the focus of importance, in the exercise: the word, in poetry, the single word, has been assigned, as nowhere else in the literary uses of language, the function of delivering thought as the time-free, ever-immediate life of being—reality indivisible. This dedication in the long, historically sustained concept of poetry, to the meaning-potency of words in their distinctness as single utterances, is a far cry from the cries accompanying the efforts of human beings in their earliest state as such to overcome in song the bondage of inarticulateness. C. M. Bowra, in *Primitive Song*, describes how meaningless sounds are found cried out, in the singing performances of people identifiable as humanly primitive—individual song-sounds paired with individual oral utterances. One may identify these outcries, in their comparability to the meaning-enunciative character of word-sounds, as bodily reflections of meaning-impulsions of the mind not musically enactable, expressible.

## 7

We have, deeply entrenched in poetry as a custom of word-use, a disposition, peculiar to it, to putting an emphasis of meaning-potency on the individual word. In the customs of word-use of other literary forms of language employment, and in the varying modes of general speaking-habit, meaning-potency is distributed through words in units of sense-accumulation. Yet this superiority of poetry of respect-paying to the relation of language to the mind as serving to make the meaning-impulsions of thought distinctly expressible—the importance words have in it in their individual meaning-potency—is interlocked with verse-procedures harking back to a lyrical adaptation of language to the physical compulsions inhering in the musical background of song. But traditional, languaged, song evidently harks back to wordless primitive song, and in this there seems to be present, as the humanly inevitable, promptings to utterances ejected with some energy of mental will to meaning-delivered, though without expressive effect. The history of poetry belongs not just to literary history, but to the history of the struggle of human beings to realize by their minds' powers of linguistic functioning the actuality of their identity as minds—their reality as human. As belonging to the literary scene of language employment, poetry represents a commitment to use words to the utmost possible as precious implements of the mind, fashioners of thought in shapes of truth. But the proviso 'the utmost possible' corresponds with there being in poetic word-use custom, despite its honoring of the individual word as a meaning-entity, mind-made, mind-natured, an instability in word-enunciating orientation.

The historical ingredients of poetry as a mode of language-employment humanly superior, mentally superior, to other modes comprise as part of its functional literariness, its formalities of historical conformity with itself, patterns of word-delivery regulation echoic of the musically compelling—not of the mind-impelled. In its historically conventional literary identity, poetry obstructed human capabilities of fulfilling the potentialities of language—of fulfilling the requirements of the human mind—by the incorporation in its custom of procedures followed as if they accorded with linguistic principle and the natural speaking needs of the human mind. The linguistic superiority of poetry in the importance attached in it to the individual word lapses in the limitedness of instances in which individual words are given, in their place of occurrence in a poem, full linguistic value, so that they mean in active immediacy there what they mean definitively *in* the language. The superior linguistic quality of poetry rests in large part on the fact that in poetic use the number of words that have particular emphasis-force as what they mean markedly



exceeds the proportion characteristic of other literary forms of language-employment, and that characteristic of language-employment in the human general. But besides the qualified truth-scrupulosity of poetry, the setting of key meaning-marks at helpful intervals, this sense-making discipline of poetry has not been a major factor in the pursuit of it or in its cultural attraction. Poetry has accommodated a pattern of operations affecting bodily sensibilities, the meaning-recognitions of the mind in dim removedness at best. Yet this pattern became so much identified with poetry as native in it, to it, that latter-day liberalizing of the pattern has not rid poetry of the attribution to it, in its ambition of linguistic success, of dependence, for activating the truth-properties of language, on a body-mind, physicality-thought interlockedness, as the source of the power of words to mean. Even, in our time, as it has appeared to me, bodily sensibility has acquired a status of higher poetic authoritative-ness than the mental in word-use determination. The traditional linguistic superiority of poetry has taken on, much, a look of verbalistic dexterity; poems have been reading, more and more, as tongue-gymnastics.

The history of poetry, as I have written here, is not only part of literary history, but part, also, of the history of the struggle of human beings to know and conduct themselves as beings of mind, through the lessons of language that the mind teaches. Language projects the mind's thought-course into the time-course of the bodily immediacies in the form of particularities of thought. These particularities are constancies of the thought-processes. They are called 'meanings'. In their character as 'speakeable', mouth-ejectable sound-particularities, they are called 'words'. A word is a particularity of meaning sharable by human beings in their differences of bodily identity by their sameness in identity as beings of mind. Words travel across the barriers of bodily separations of being by force of their meaning-impulsions, effecting a common presence of minds with one another because it is the nature of mind-being to have unconfined presence. As beings of mind, human beings partake of the all-embracing mind-nature of being, have a universal sense of the real. The individual word, in human life, centers the fact of their being to their being beings of mind. In the importance bestowed on the individual word in poetry, there is celebration of the influentality of the word in the being of human beings. But this has locked the word in the confinements of localized mind-presence to which literary culture has given patronage as symbolic of the universal. For the influentality of the word in the being of human beings to be literally eloquent of the universal, it must have extension into the universe of unconfined being.

In my describing how the body-mind problem has its resolution in the ultimate in language—the word as enacting the reality of human mind-presence—I give place in universal circumstance to the problem and its resolution. I see in the human problem of being like-naturedness to the problem of the entire 'what is' as the universe of multiple being and the universe of ever-same, mind-served, being. But to elaborate on this vision [of] the influentality of the word and of the mind-presence of human beings would be as to argue human nature itself to be possessed inherently of a formidable potency. I go no further in argument here than to credit human nature with the gift of mind from the universal frame of being, and the practical actualities of the gift in the word.—And to credit poetry as having been a hiding-place for the word as a truth-potency from the depredations of human language-cowardice, but also a perpetuator of the separation of the natural human truth-instinct into a two-part language-custom of superior-inferior word-use. I have attempted here to open to a broader view than is provided in any of the linguistic practices of our time the problem of being a human being as that of being a speaking being. And I rest here at this summary of what I have attempted.

### Afternotes

#### 1

The rhyming feature of poetry accords with the compulsive intensities of 'song' that installed themselves in the verse-mechanics of poetic composition. In the echoic similarity of word-sounds of rhyme, as in assonance, repetition has effect as the harmony of the compulsive—the effect of seeming reasonable. Poetic word-rhyming confuses, and is confused with, the linguistically natural—and reasonable—leaning in poetry to emphasis on the individual word as a meaning-entity.

#### 2

Thought is a natural concomitant of human-being, by common recognition. It is—where, when, determinedly engaged in—a knowledge-directed activity, and, as such, a certain fullness of exercise of the attributes of being. Thought must be intrinsic in the whole actuality of being, being as an intrinsically active state, essentially self-possessing, although not divisible into being as active or inactive. What, then, is the non-difference between being as mind, and being as 'everything'—the 'all' of extension and the singleness of awareness? It must be that between extension and concentration. I shall attempt nothing further in these terms of identification of being-



states than the proposition that the identity of extension and concentration, as inaction and action, is effectuated in thought; and a corollary suggestion as to the nature of human-being—that it expresses this.

### Additionally, On Music

I am appending some writing of mine on music of the early 'thirties—never before published.\* I have only just now, after completing this essay, attentively reread it. In the long, long, while since the writing of it, I did not engage in any close thinking on music, though it remained for me a subject awaiting adequate identification—unfinished intellectual business. I cannot at this time apply myself to this subject beyond the incidental consideration I have given it in my treating of the body-mind and the language problem. But it seems to me that in my early writing I made a more direct approach to it than I have done in my later treating of it here—treating it there as itself, rather than as an influential element in the structure of 'verse'.

I am moved to quote here from Pierre Boulez's manifesto 'Technology and the Composer' two pronouncements on the possibilities of musical invention that exhibit what I remark on in my earlier and later writing on music as to the dangerous over-reaching claims that can be made for it. Boulez wrote "we shall establish a geography of the sound universe", "the reasoned extension of the material will inspire new modes of thought". The idea of interconnection between new technical developments in music's physicalities and the operations of the mind figures seriously with contemporary composers distinguished for their musical and general cultural sophistication. John Ash, writing in *P. N. Review* 51 (Summer 1986) on Music and Literature, described their position (with which he is sympathetic), one divided between the musical and the literary, thus, "The music of Del Tredici, Holloway, Ligeti, Knussen and others deliberately seeks to arouse 'memories like dreams'"; and I have come upon a persuasion in a young musician, a friend, of a memory-stirring force exerted by his own compositions. Body and mind blending, in both musical and poetic postures of performance, is the modern ultimate in the dismantling of language as the posture-determinant of the mind.

In the early phase of my thinking, I distinguished between 'the human', as a historically conditioned, still inconclusive quantity, and a 'something else', which I termed, for a time, 'the non-human'. In the early piece of writ-

\* Probably originally intended for *Epilogue*, the typescript was returned to Laura (Riding) Jackson in 1974 by Beryl Graves.

ing which I am presenting here, I used the terms 'the human' and 'the non-human'; and I have let them stand so for this presentation for textual fidelity's sake, although I abandoned this pairing decisively in the course of an intensifying concern with word-meaning proprieties. 'Human' became, for me, a word properly characterizing, not the historically inconclusive quantity that represented human beings as imperfect examples of what their nature prompted them to expect of themselves, but the naturally anticipatable identity-quality of full-minded being. The meaning-implication of 'human', that is, became, for me, goodness of being. The historically inconclusive quantity 'human' (that is, 'only human', the 'we all make mistakes' figure) belied the self-identifying, self-knowing nature of this truth-capable being-kind.

As to 'the non-human', or the 'something else': this terming had no connotation, for me, of divinity (or animality). It bespoke consciousness of a quality inhering in being-entire, of the unfailing: an abiding ultimate of conclusiveness, completion, correction of loss, nullifying of the impossible, fulfilling of the mutualities of the possible.—But the characterization of such a quality of being in its universal aspect seems endlessly difficult: can the essence of being in its universal aspect, its nature as the Entire, be identified as distinctly, simply, a moral or rational quality? I believe that this identification can be, to be 'right', neither simple nor difficult. It must be *right*: only that will speak the reality, be true and humanly true, of one all-ultimate sense. In how I have dealt with this problem of identification in writing on the body-mind problem, and the ultimate in language as of the same substance with it, I have been able to go no further than to plot the direction of identification with the instruments language yields for identifying the essence of the human. I think this makes at least a 'right' course.

As to music? The stationary simulating movement—the mute simulating speaking? Or body playing to itself companionships as of mind? It serves bodily loneliness. This can be a dangerous service. I mean only to point this out.

### Music

Music is inevitably associated with impediments. The technical brilliance demanded by musical procedure seems to make this statement paradoxical. It is not written as a paradox but as the first generalization necessary in the definition of music. We will not, for example, take advantage of its paradoxical quality by pointing to the physical impediments from which musicians so frequently suffer—such as that Haydn suffered from muteness or Beethoven from deafness; for we should thus only be pointing to the tech-



nical brilliance of musicians and perhaps giving the impression that we meant our first generalization about music to constitute the statement that music was, first of all, paradoxical. Our first generalization about music is merely that it is inevitably associated with impediments. We do not mean to substantiate this statement wittily by instances of chance physical imperfections in musicians.

We wish to treat of music as it is based on the notion of impediments. Musical instruments are carefully constructed impediments; vocal music uses the vocal apparatus as a downright instrumental impediment rather than as a critical instrument for the negation of immediate positiveness—which is its function in speech and, more perfectly, in writing, where it effects not merely negation but silence. Music, that is, makes impediment itself the end; makes impediment itself good. As such music is an appreciation of matter as a disciplinary obstacle to the reconciliation, the joining, of opposites. Music separates. But the goodness of music depends on such recognition of itself as a discipline: it is only good—it is only properly music—when it is a confession of impediment. Thus music lightens the mental burden by expelling hopelessly material (resistant) being from mental experience; it is the most violent act of division between the human body and the human mind and, further, between the human and the non-human. Primitive music demonstrates the discipline of music most purely: by music the physical human being is scrupulously separated from the non-human; not only separated from it but destroyed as having only immediate possibility. Music states the ultimate impossibility of the physical; it is the immediate spending and destruction of the physical. In primitive art the human is absorbed in the identity of the non-human; in primitive music impossible physical identity is cast out. Physical identity is enjoyed even as it is cast out: the enjoyment has the value of pain. Music embraces that which does not yield to reconciliation. Properly it expels the unyielding, and the expulsion is good because it is painful—or rather the degree of pain is the measure of the completeness of the expulsion.

Music grows impure as it grows less painful; as, instead of expelling the unyielding, it introduces as an element of the musical act—or as the starting-point of the musical act—some mental lightness that makes the physical element seem compatible and, therefore, virtuously enjoyable. All civilized music tends to develop itself from some attenuated idea of the non-human suitable as a foil to musical dilation: instead of dramatizing physical humility, it dramatizes physical vanity in impedimentive material that can somehow keep a remote hold on non-materiality. This of course involves as

much falsificatory attenuation of the material as it does of the non-material. Music indicates how the physical and the mental are mutually exclusive, describes the quantitative impossibility between them. Civilized music has dealt largely in equivocations between physical and mental experience, using the impeding material, or instrument, as a neutral region in which the fundamental impossibilities between the two are suspended—instead of as an impassable barrier. Civilized music, that is, has been largely poetic—constructive, 'spiritual'. It has flattered instead of insulted the human body: and thus insulted the non-human identity with which the human mind attempts likeness. Modernistically primitive music reacts against historical music by expelling the mental from the physical; by directly insulting the non-human identity. But in so construing the musical act it is closer to the nature of music than civilized, or historical, music, because it has reasserted impediment; although instead of pain it achieves physical insensitivity, and instead of expulsion of the physical, only a stupid self-isolating and self-brutalizing of the physical.

From our first generalization, then, that music is inevitably associated with impediments, follow other generalizations: that it is properly the immediate expending, in a destructive sense, of ultimately irreconcilable physical elements; that as such it is inevitably associated with pain; that it is anti-poetic—the depoeticization of what is not properly poeticizable; that it is an involuntary honesty in the material confessing the mutual exclusiveness of the material and the non-material. These generalizations have somewhat shaped themselves into a definition of music; they have also indicated abuses of musical procedure deriving from a shame of the nature of music. Music in its civilized forms has been chiefly preoccupied with covering this shame and modifying musical behaviour so far as was possible without destroying the value of music as physical relief; but this value is necessarily associated with pain, and there can be no relief from pain without admission of pain, especially where, as in music, the medicine is in the admission itself.

In intellectualization music establishes a sympathetic equivalence with the scientific argument; so soon as it discards its purgative function and seeks to protract its physical immediacy into an intellectual duration, it becomes an artificial, self-enclosed universe like the scientific universe, with the difference that it defines itself not merely as a physical universe which is *the* universe, but as a physical universe which is also the poetic universe: the non-material included in the material as conditioned by it.

The universe of music is composed of a continuous immediacy of material incidents punctuated by controlled non-material gaps, and as such it



constitutes a spiritual improvement on the scientific universe and, equally, lacks its mechanical sincerity. It encourages in itself the spiritual incident, thus necessarily making the material incident an immediate maximum rather than an immediate minimum: thus necessarily making it the relatively complex unit of material idiosyncrasy rather than—as in the universe of science—the simple unit of material difference. The scientific universe has merely an absolutism sufficient to the definition of science as a universe. The universe of music, in seeking to usurp the poetic universe, must be more than absolute within its own limitations; it must be arbitrary. Intellectualized music is not, then, like intellectualized science, merely dogmatically a-moral; it is high-handedly immoral and conscious of its immorality—conscious that it is attenuating truth.

\* \* \*

It will be noted that in the account I gave of music a half-century ago (at the least), I closely identified the poetic mental and linguistic stand with transcendence of the physical orientations of human identity. My later thinking and writing gives evidence of my learning the extent of the gap between poetic idealization of the possibilities of truth and the ultimate in language as a practicality within the reaches of the human state. Once the fact of human identity as a fact of mind-being is allowed full place in the problem of being human, the lines of identification of the components of the problem clarify themselves in the haze of historied experience.

\* \* \*

Finally, to touch on the question of what can be conceived to be the character of the 'ultimate in language' as delivered utterance—the words not cast in poetic forms of utterance or, yet, making their way along the course of the conversation-spirited medley of speaking styles called 'prose'. No one besides myself has found poetry to be a token tribute-paying to an unrealized, but not unrealizable, linguistic ultimate. I like George S. Fraser's defence of poetry in his little book of 1970, *Metre, Rhyme and Free Verse* (he was my friend in his last years). "I think that most great English poetry approximates to speech rather than song—and that it is more important to relate metrical problems in poetry to patterns of meaning than to purely musical patterns." He wrote further: "The stress pattern of pure stress verse is, in fact, exactly the same as the stress pattern of natural speech or informal prose." Here I think he overdoes his loyalty both to poetry and to ordinary speech and ordinary composition as belonging, both

kinds, to the linguistically natural. Both kinds comprise, differently, elements of the arbitrary.

The linguistic ultimate—what language, of its provision for complete thinking and the saying of it, makes naturally possible—requires complete address of mind to the undertaken commitment of human presence to communicate the mind's humanly pertinent content. Meaning-pattern and stress-pattern, then, dispose themselves according to the conditions of honor. What is said is what there is in the mind to be said: and it is said with desire for its full delivery—and for its full reception. The ultimate in language is the ultimate in human self-identification as mind, minds.